

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 16653

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, SY

SUBJECT: UNSYG WALDHEIM'S COMMENTS TO THE ITALIANS ABOUT THE MIDDLE-EAST TRIP

1. ON HIS WAY BACK FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, UNSYG WALDHEIM STOPPED OVER BRIEFLY IN ROME WHERE HE MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RUMOR. POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DUCCI, WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE MEETING, TOLD THE DCM THAT WALDHEIM IS EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH THE OUTCOME OF HIS TRIP. THE ROLE OF THE UN IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAD BEEN CRITICIZED AND WALDHEIM WAS DELIGHTED THAT PRESIDENT ASSAD HAD DECIDED TO USE THE UN, AND WALDHEIM IN PARTICULAR, AS THE CHANNEL TO MAKE KNOWN HIS DECISION ON RETAINING THE UN FORCE AT GOLAN HIGHTS. WHAT MADE THIS DECISION EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE TO WALDHEIM WAS THE APPARENT REVERSAL OF THE SYRIAN HARD LINE. WALDHEIM ATTRIBUTED ASSAD'S REVERSAL TO CONVERGENCE TO PERSUASION BY U.S., USSR, AND SOME ARAB STATES, NOTABLY EGYPT.

2. ASSAD REPORTEDLY TOLD WALDHEIM THAT WHILE HE WAS PREPARED TO RE-NEW THE UN MANDATE FOR SIX MONTHS, HE MUST BE ASSURED BY MARCH THAT EITHER THE BILATERAL STEP-BY-SEP PROCESS WILL BRING RESULTS OR THAT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WILL BE RECONVENED. WALDHEIM ALSO APPARENTLY INFORMED PRESIDENT SADAT AT ALLEN'S AND RABIN'S BEHEST THAT ISRAEL WAS READY TO NEGOTIATE A SECOND
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WITHDRAWAL IN THE SINAI. SADAT HAD EXIBITED INTEREST BUT REPLIED

THAT HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO MAKE MAJOR POLITICAL CONCESSIONS AT THIS TIME.

3. FINALLY, WALDHEIM WAS GRATIFIED BY HIS RECEPTION IN JERUSALEM WHERE RABIN AND ALLON ASSURED HIM THAT THE ISRAELIS MADE A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE UNGA WITH WHICH THEY WERE EXTREMELY DISGUSTED AND THE UN ORGANIZATION AS REPRESENTED BY WALDHEIM FOR WHICH THEY STILL HAVE RESPECT. VOLPE

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